

Evening Telegraph

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TUESDAY, MARCH 28, 1871.

MR. SUMNER'S ANTI-SAN DOMINGO SPEECH.

WHATEVER may be the inherent value or worthlessness of Dominica, it is impossible to read Senator Sumner's speech without coming to the conclusion that very irregular and improper means have been resorted to in the negotiations relating to that proposed acquisition. The sketch he gives of the leaders of Dominica is anything but complimentary. Our own politicians are had enough, but they are embodiments of virtue when compared with the rulers of the Spanish-American nations, and, more especially, such men as Baez. He has figured during the last eight or ten years as the active ally of the Spaniards in their efforts to establish their dominion over Dominica, as a zealous opponent of annexation to the United States, as a patriot of the first water, as a cruel and sanguinary tyrant, and, finally, as a gigantic real estate speculator, who proposes to transfer his country bodily to the United States Government. The principal portion of Senator Sumner's speech is made up of an exposure of the tyrannies, perfidies, and rascalities of Baez, and of a series of complaints that the naval power of this country was improperly employed to maintain his authority while the negotiations with the United States were pending. All these points seem to be clearly established. There can be no doubt that Baez is a cruel and unprincipled scoundrel; that the Dominicans, either through their own inherent efforts or by the aid of the Haytiens, would have deposed him during the last year, if American war vessels had not propped up his shadowy authority; and that the administration issued orders and rendered assistance to Baez of such a character that it is amenable to caustic criticism. It is probable that some of these acts may be, in part, explained by the defenders of the Presidential policy; and it is only fair that their reasons should be duly considered before final judgment is passed on this part of the controversy; but as matters stand now, there are apparently good grounds for the belief that American fleets have been maintaining a usurper in office for the purpose of enabling him to sell to us his country. The alleged violations of international law connected with such a transaction, upon which Senator Sumner lays great stress, are of even less importance than their probable bearing upon the practical value of Dominica. We bought Florida from the Spaniards, but the long fight with the Seminoles cost the nation more money than the territory was ever worth; and if the Dominicans, in consequence of a belief that Baez has betrayed them, or from any other cause, resist the enforcement of our authority, they may prove as worthless and as troublesome as the Seminoles. That they do not lack the power, even when under chieftain leaders like Cabral, to wage hostilities in an effective manner, is proved by their recent successful resistance to Spain; and it is not pleasant to contemplate the prospect that we would be compelled to wage a war like that continued for years in Florida, or like the wars waged by Spain against the Cuban insurgents and against the Dominicans. If our first step after annexation must be the massacre of an insurgent population capable of prolonging a struggle indefinitely by a retreat into interior mountains or swamps, we may well shrink from a policy that would entail such repulsive, distasteful, and cruel duties. The forthcoming report of the commissioners sent to Dominica may throw additional light upon the sentiments of the masses of that country; but it will be hardly safe to place implicit reliance upon their opinions. With the results of the experiment made by Napoleon and Maximilian in Mexico, and a foreknowledge of the defeat of the effort to re-establish Spanish authority over Dominica, which was apparently commenced with the unanimous consent of the people interested, we may well pause, in view of the complications described in Sumner's speech, before we accept the black elephant tendered by Baez.

THE PUBLIC BUILDINGS.

THE anti-Penn Squarites having held their indignation meeting without apparently convincing anybody but themselves—i. e. the property-holders about Washington and Independence Squares—of the iniquity of the so-called "intersection job," having set off their fireworks without exciting any enthusiasm except among a small crowd of small boys; having instigated a corruption investigation which has come to nothing, for the reason that no witnesses can be found to substantiate the accusations so boldly put forth in the anti-Penn Square organ; and having now, it would seem exhausted both argument and vituperation, it is to be hoped that the commissioners will, uninfluenced by factions clamor, past, present, or prospective, go to work and erect the public buildings where the people have said that they shall be erected, without further delay. The Legislature took the one proper course to settle definitely and forever the controversy with regard to the site for the new public buildings by submitting the subject to the vote of the citizens of Philadelphia. Every man, woman, and child in Philadelphia knows how the election resulted, and the choice of Penn Square by an overwhelming majority ought to have put a stop to all further agitation. The attempt of the property-holders whose incomes would probably be affected by the removal of the public offices from their present location to nullify the decision of the citizens of Philadelphia is one of the most shameful and impudent violations of the fundamental principle of republicanism that has ever occurred in this or any other community. The motives of those who have opposed the plans of the commission have been so utterly transparent that their arguments have been deprived of any force they would have had under other circumstances, and the whole effect of the post-election controversy has been to confirm those who voted for Penn Square in the opinion that they made a proper decision last October. We do not blame the Washington Square property-holders for wishing to hold fast to their present good things, but it certainly cannot be expected that the entire city of Philadelphia must be inconvenienced in order to oblige a small coterie of individuals who are engaged in the lucrative business of letting out lawyers' offices at exorbitant rates. This would be carrying the principle of accommodation entirely too far, and while the desolate owners of buildings in the neighborhood of Fifth and Sixth and Chestnut and Walnut streets have our sincere sympathies in their misfortune, we must deprecate the manner in which they have endeavored to obstruct a great public enterprise in order that their private interests might be benefited.

The present reasonable weather should be taken advantage of by the Building Commissioners to commence the work of digging the cellar and laying the foundations, in order that it may be well advanced before next winter. If the work is delayed until the commissioners cease to be criticized, it will never commence at all; and it should be remembered that all the clamor which has been raised since the election has been with a view of preventing the public buildings from being removed from their present location. The commissioners will not be doing their duty if they allow themselves any longer to be impeded in the important work which they have in hand by the Chinese thunder of the anti-Penn Squarites; and if we are ever to have public buildings suitable to the dignity of the city, and which will afford decent accommodations for our courts and municipal offices they should be commenced at once and finished as rapidly as possible.

THE INCOME TAX RETURNS.

We published yesterday a remarkable editorial article from the New York Tribune concerning the changes in the law regulating the assessment and collection of the income tax, and the fact that the Commissioner of Internal Revenue, in preparing the blanks for the returns, had overlooked these changes. General Pleasanton, whose many efforts to secure the repeal of the tax have not been lost sight of by the people, has promptly rectified the mistake made at the outset. His decision modifying the original form of return will be found on another page, and every person who has not yet made his return should read it before submitting answers to the pertinent questions embraced in the blanks recently distributed by the assistant assessors. The Commissioner fully meets the point made in reference to the details of income, by authorizing a form of return which simply requires a statement of the net income liable to taxation. In reference, however, to the cases of those whose gross incomes did not exceed \$2000 during 1870, the Commissioner fails to give all the relief that was demanded. A portion of the affidavit has been stricken out, but every person whose income did not exceed \$2000 is still required to make an affidavit to the effect that he "was not possessed of an income valued in the United States legal-tender currency liable to be assessed according to the provisions of the act of July 14, 1870." As was shown by the Tribune article, there is no authority of law for the exaction of any return whatever in such cases. Whether or not it is desirable for the people to defy the Commissioner by neglecting to make the return, is a matter for individual decision. Many will doubtless prefer to hunt up the assistant assessor to avoid all possibility of trouble, while others will be prompted to rely upon their rights as citizens and refuse compliance with an unwarranted decision of the Commissioner.

THE ENGLISH HOUSE OF LORDS is determined to preserve intact all the legacies of the Middle Ages. Last night the bill legalizing marriage with a deceased wife's sister, previously passed by the House of Commons, came up for final disposition, but only to be rejected, after a lengthy discussion. The prohibition is repeatedly violated in England, it is opposed to the spirit of the age, and the House of Lords, by its adverse action, has simply aimed another blow at its own stability.

SMITH, THE "ROOSTER," has pneumatic tubes on the brain. Yesterday afternoon he introduced in the Legislature a bill authorizing the construction of pneumatic tubes under the city of Philadelphia and under the Delaware river. If this bill should become a law, it is to be hoped that Smith will be at once injected into his submarine network, and kept moving back and forth under ground until he gets his fill of pneumatics. Perhaps it would be a good thing to authorize the construction of a pneumatic tube under the Atlantic to San Domingo, when we could rid ourselves forever of Smith by shooting him down into the tropics.

OBITUARY.

McKean Buchanan, Paymaster U. S. N. McKean Buchanan, a distinguished United States naval officer, died recently at Charlestown, Mass. He held the office of paymaster, and was one of the oldest that rank in the service, being in his seventy-third year. He was a native of Baltimore, a son of Dr. George Buchanan, and grandson of Thomas McKean, one of the signers of the Declaration of Independence, and afterwards a Governor of this Commonwealth. Mr. Buchanan was commissioned as purser in the navy by President Adams in 1826. Since that time he has seen thirty-two and a half years of active service, one-half of which time was spent at sea. He made four cruises to the Pacific and one voyage around the world in the sloop Vincennes, which trip was the first of the kind made by any American man-of-war. In 1861 he was on board the frigate Congress when it engaged with and was disabled by the Rebel iron-clad Merrimack in Hampton Roads. In that deadly naval battle he commanded the berth-deck division of his vessel. This was his final service afloat. By the law of December, 1861, he was placed on the retired list by reason of his age, but on account of his great abilities he was kept in active service until within a short time of his death.

John Tappan.

John Tappan, a distinguished and venerable merchant of Boston, better known as President and Treasurer of the American Tract Society, which office he held for forty years, died on Saturday last, at his residence near that city. At the time of his death he was nearly ninety years of age. His native place was Northampton, but he went to Boston about the year 1799, and has since remained there. After a short but very successful business career, he retired upon a competency as early as 1825. He has since held several offices of business honor and trust in the city. He was at one time a religious follower of Dr. Channing, but afterwards returned to the orthodox faith. He held the most responsible office of the Tract Society, and was always interested in foreign missions, holding the position of member of the Prudential Committee of the American Board. To this cause, as well as to many others, he was always a liberal contributor. He also held offices in other religious and benevolent institutions, and was a prominent and early advocate of the temperance movement.

NOTICES.

OVERCOATS, ALL THE NEW STYLES OVERCOATS FOR SPRING. AND NEW COLORS. BEAUTIFUL, FRESH SPRING SUITS, BEAUTIFUL, FRESH SPRING SUITS, BEAUTIFUL, FRESH SPRING SUITS, FOR BUSINESS OR DRESS. BOYS' ALL-WOOL SUITS, BOYS' ALL-WOOL SUITS, BOYS' ALL-WOOL SUITS, FOR SUNDAYS AND WEEKDAYS. SUNDAYS AND WEEKDAYS. VERY DURABLE AND VERY CHEAP. VERY DURABLE AND VERY CHEAP. IMMENSE ASSORTMENT OF CHILDREN'S FANCY SUITS, IMMENSE ASSORTMENT OF CHILDREN'S FANCY SUITS, ON THE FIRST FLOOR. WANAMAKER & BROWN'S, WANAMAKER & BROWN'S, WANAMAKER & BROWN'S, OAK HALL, OAK HALL, OAK HALL, THE POPULAR CLOTHING HOUSE, S. E. CORNER SIXTH AND MARKET STREETS.

THE SUDDEN CHANGES OF TEMPERATURE, together with the searching winds which are now so common, are causing severe Colds to prevail everywhere, and laying the foundations for many cases of Inflammation of the Lungs, Pleurisy, Asthma, and other Lung Disorders. Prudent people should now take especial precautions to avoid unnecessary exposure, and if unfortunate enough to contract Colds, would do well to resort at once to Dr. Jayne's Expecto-rant, a safe and reliable remedy, which will not only promptly cure Coughs and Colds, but will relieve and strengthen the Pulmonary and Bronchial organs, and remove all dangerous symptoms. Sold everywhere.

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EXTRA NEW MESS MACKEREL, YARMOUTH BLOATERS, SPICED AND FRESH SALMON.

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(SUCCESSOR TO SIMON COLTON & CLARKE.) S. W. Corner BROAD and WALNUT, 181 N. THIRD ST. PHILADELPHIA.

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MARCH 20TH, 1871.

MESSES. COPPLAND & BROWNING - GENTLEMEN: The Building Committee, and the Trustees of the Arch Street Methodist Episcopal Church, take this method of expressing to you their appreciation of the faithfulness with which you have fulfilled your contract with them for the erection of their church building. We believe you have complied with your contract in letter and in spirit. The result is all we could have hoped for, and in these days of severe competition, with so much contract work imperfectly done, is more than we expected. As yet, no sign of any crack indicating settling of the work is apparent, not even in the spire, with its estimated weight from foundation to finial of from 200 to 300 tons. Those of us whose duties required us to be more frequently in business relations with you accord you the merit of pleasant and obliging attention to our suggestions, and to those of Mr. A. HAYSON, the Architect, and offer ourselves as references to others who may feel disposed to contract with you for the erection of buildings. This note, un solicited by you, will be published by us. On behalf of the Board of Trustees of the Arch Street M. E. Church, JOHN WHITEMAN, President, J. M. LONGACRE, Secretary.

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